

Message Text

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S E C R E T SEOUL 3217

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MORG MOPS KS JA US
SUBJ: MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE LANDING EXERCISE (MAFLEX)
NEAR KANGNANE

REF: SEOUL 1695

1. USFK AND ALL INVOLVED COMMANDS HAVE REVIEWED THE SUBJECT
MAFLEX AND HAVE REFINED PROCEDURES USED FOR CONTROLLING
AIRCRAFT TO ENSURE THAT EFFECTIVE MEANS ARE AVAILABLE TO
PREVENT INTRUSION INTO NORTH KOREAN CLAIMED AIRSPACE.
ADDITIONALLY, MARINES AND USN HAVE REVIEWED REQUIREMENT FOR
USE OF KANGNUNG AREA IN VIEW OF ITS PROPINQUITY TO NORTH
KOREAN BORDER, IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER LOCATIONS.

2. REVIEW HAS REVEALED THAT OTHER EXERCISE AREAS ARE INADE-
QUATE FOR EXERCISE OBJECTIVES THAT MARINES HAVE IN MIND BECAUSE
THEY DO NOT PERMIT MORE THAN ONE BATTALION AT A TIME TO CROSS
THE BEACH. IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY USE OF ADDITIONAL SHIPPING
AND GAIN VALUABLE EXPERIENCE WHICH SIMULTANEOUS MULTI-
BATTALION LANDING AND SHBSEQUENT INLAND THRUST AND ENCIRCLEMENT
OPERATIONS PROVIDE, LARGER, LESS CONSTRICTED AREA THAN
IS PROVIDED BY TRADITIONAL ALTERNATE SITE NEAR POHANG IS
REQUIRED. BOTH AGGRESSOR AND DEFENDER GROUND FORCES

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WILL REQUIRE MANEUVER ROOM WHICH IS NOT PROVIDED BY POHANG
ALTERNATE. USN HAS TOLD MARINES IT CANNOT JUSTIFY USE
OF ADDITIONAL SHIPPING UNLESS MULTI-BATTALION SIMULTANEOUS
LANDING PLANNED.

3. USFK AND COMMANDER USAFK/314 AIR DIV HAVE CLOSELY
REVIEWED AND REFINED PLANS FOR CONTROLLING ESTIMATED

200 SORTIES DAILY NEAR DMZ WHICH WOULD BE GENERATED IN SUPPORT OF MAFLEX. THEY ARE CONFIDENT THAT THEY CAN HANDLE THIS NUMBER OF SORTIES EASILY USING PROCEDURES TESTED IN TEAM SPIRIT EXERCISE, DURING WHICH DAILY SORTIES NEAR DMZ EXCEEDED 500 AND TOTAL DAILY SORTIES NATIONWIDE OCCASIONALLY REACHED 1200. CONTROL MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING THIS VOLUME OF TRAFFIC HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY TESTED, AND ENTIRE AREA NEAR DMZ CAN BE CLEARED OF AIRCRAFT IN 5-7 MINUTES USING THESE PROCEDURES. PILOTS IN AIRCRAFT WHICH EXPERIENCE RADIO FAILURE WILL AUTOMATICALLY HEAD DUE SOUTH. ADDITIONALLY, THERE WILL BE ADDED COMMAND AND CONTROL CAPABILITY IN THE FORM OF AN AIRBORNE COMMAND AIRCRAFT WHICH WAS NOT AVAILABLE DURING TEAM SPIRIT. THIS WILL FURTHER ENHANCE OFT-TESTED PROCEDURE FOR WARNING INDIVIDUAL AIRCRAFT AWAY FROM DMZ SHOULD ANY STRAY IN THAT DIRECTION. EXERCISE AREA BOUNDARY WILL BE NO CLOSER THAN 25 MILES FROM DMZ AT NEAREST POINT.

4. AIRCRAFT CONTROL SYSTEM WAS PERSONALLY REVIEWED BY COMMANDER USAFK/314 AIR DIV IN WHOM EMBASSY HAS UTMOST CONFIDENCE, WHO SAYS HE APPROACHED PROPOSED EXERCISE

WITH SKEPTICISM AND ENDED CONVINCED THAT PROCEDURES WOULD MORE THAN MEET REQUIREMENT TO PREVENT INCIDENTS. ON BASIS OUR OWN REVIEW OF USFK FINDINGS AND OF ASSURANCES RECEIVED FROM RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS BASED ON ADDITIONAL
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REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVES AND SAFETY PROCEDURES, EMBASSY HAS GIVEN APPROVAL FOR EXERCISE, SUBJECT TO FINAL REVIEW AS EXERCISE DATE APPROACHES.
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